

**LUCY ROBBINS WELLES LIBRARY
ANNUAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 8, 2008**

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Paul Crosswaith, Marie Dowling, Anna Eddy, Sue Halpin, Judy Igielski, Iris Larsson, Maureen O'Connor Lyons, Tony Palermino, Eric Rothauser, Neil Ryan, Diane Stamm, Trudie Walker, Sue Wright

STAFF

Marian Amodeo, Library Director
Lisa Masten, Assistant Library Director
Gail Whitney, Secretary for the Board

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Maureen O'Connor Lyons at 7:05 P.M.

I. PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Maureen O'Connor Lyons, President of the Library Board of Directors welcomed everyone to the Annual Board of Directors Meeting. She thanked everyone for coming and indicated to those in attendance that prior to the program, a few matters of business needed to be attended to. She mentioned that information will be provided on the Library's new Legacy Society and its list of inductees. There will also be an announcement on a new scholarship for Library employees.

II. SECRETARY'S REPORT/COMMUNICATIONS/MINUTES

Maureen indicated that the minutes are on file and asked for a motion to approve them as unread. **MOTION: Marie Dowling made a motion to waive the reading of the minutes from the September 10, 2007 meeting, Anna Eddy seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion was passed unanimously.**

III. TREASURER'S REPORT

Iris Larsson reported that the Library's investments are stable. In December 2007 the Library purchased the second house next door, both houses have been razed, and plans are in development for a Library expansion.

IV. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It occurred to me as I was writing this report that this is the eleventh time I am standing here before you, having passed my tenth anniversary as Library Director in May. So, you may begin to wonder what I can possibly report on that is new and fresh after all these many years. It's not as difficult as you might think. Each year brings a new challenge, renewed creativity on the part of staff, and new ways to meet the needs of this vibrant community of Newington.

I'll give a quick summary of some of the highlights of the year that began in July 2007, and continued through June 2008.

Get a Clue @ Your Library was the theme of the Children's reading program last summer, as 1,300 youthful readers participated, with over 1,000 of them achieving reading goals of forty days or more. 63 programs were offered throughout the summer months for Newington's young residents. School assemblies in September with a performance by the Activated Storytellers completed this most successful season. A good indication of how popular the summer programs were was when a patron called while vacationing in Puerto Rico to sign up for the annual library sleepover!

The annual *Sliva Young People's Literary Series* event welcomed author Amy McDonald - all 3rd and 4th graders in Newington attended the assembly at which she spoke about her writing. The second year of the series entitled *Play for All*, a playgroup for special needs children and their caregivers, achieved greater numbers and more success, as library staff pursued a lead and teamed up with the Connecticut Arena for a one time program that was so successful it turned into a regular skating program called Skate For All. Taken over by the skating center itself, this proved to be a huge delight for all the autistic children in the group.

Meanwhile, the department continued to be active in the community. They forged new ties with TGIFridays for fundraising purposes and with the state Dept. of Mental Health for programs and resource people. And they continued to take the lead in the schools for promoting the Nutmeg Children's Book Award, the state Children's Choice award.

Finally, the museum pass program continues to be very popular, and, thanks to the Friends, passes to the Harriet Beecher Stowe House and Imagine-Nation were added to the already wide selection of passes.

Teens were certainly not forgotten as more than 30 programs were held exclusively for this target group. Wizard Rock, Beading and Reading, LOL @ Your Library improv, Anime After Hours, and Henna Body Art were just a few of the creative and appealing events to which teens flocked. In the spring, when the opportunity arose to hire a new Librarian, we chose to find one who will be LRW first ever fulltime Teen Librarian.

For adults, music still draws a big crowd in Newington. Three jazz concerts were held during the year and each one was a hit with its audience. CT native Giacomo Gates, veteran jazz singer Sheila Jordan, and relative newcomer Ben Altman wowed the crowd in the Town Hall Council Chambers. We're big on series - *The World Cuisine*, *Brown Bag Its*, *Food for Life*, and *Consumer Protection* were all well-received, as were all the other events that totaled 101. The combined audience was 4,051, an 8% increase over attendance of last year.

The Big Read - that collaborative effort with the libraries of the Capitol Region towns chose *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett, a classic mystery with broad appeal as the title for this community read. A screening of the movie of the same name, a screening of the biography of Humphrey Bogart, and two book discussions rounded out the month-long celebration of this title.

A new reading program was introduced in January 2008 for adults. Not knowing what participation would be the staff who organized the event hoped for 100 participants. I wasn't

surprised when they attracted 229 adults who read 1,295 books over a five-week period. And, judging from the 49% increase on the very first day of registration for the 2008 adult summer reading program, I anticipate continued growth for this wildly popular adult diversion.

New teacher orientations, updating of the town organizations lists, the *Book A Librarian* service, the addition of over 200 businesses to the Newington Business Directory, a presence at the Senior Expo, as well as speaking engagements, moderating of books groups, and a myriad of meetings with other town departments and organizations were all part of the routine of library life.

In technology matters, the old library website was converted over to a new one, with the help of software that was chosen for both the Town and the library. Because our website is so complex, the conversion was a major project of our year, but one for which Assistant Director Lisa Masten was up to the task, and handled the internal conversion and the teaching of staff with ease. The new website is truly a work in progress, as we continually add new dimensions to this virtual library of ours. And just in case you may not think that we are running a library on the Internet, last year we had remote use statistics that included 12,000 requests using the Science and History databases, 117,844 searches using the newspaper databases, and 4,843 searches on Heritage Quest, the genealogy database. These are astounding. I won't rattle off more, but I can...just goes to show that some people don't ever come in to the library building, but still "come to the library" from the Internet.

Last year in my annual report I highlighted issues with this 20 year old building. Bookshelves are crammed, storage space for all audio-visual materials is at capacity, and offices are sorely lacking space for the current numbers of staff. We've weeded and weeded, added free-standing shelving, and made use of every bit of free space. And there were a host of physical plant problems, too. But, much was accomplished to make this place sparkle as much as possible and function in as efficient a way as we could make it. The Teen area received more help in the form of new magazine shelving, and computer stations; part of the roof was replaced; new chairs were purchased for all computer stations- thanks to the Friends; fresh paint was applied to the study rooms, atrium and areas of the Children's Room and adult book stacks.

The Friends sponsored trips to Block Island and NYC. Their November book sale was moved to the Senior and Disabled Center- a very good move as they netted the most money ever from a fall booksale. The May weekend sale continues to be the best in the area. They even sold books at the Waterfall Festival. Friends had a presence at three polling venues on Election Day, The Chamber's Business Showcase that helped keep the library in the public eye. Finally, CT author Patricia Kleindienst was the guest speaker at the Friends Annual meeting in June.

In any organization of 60+ staff, there is always bound to be turnover. This past year, much time was spent by administrators on the formal hiring process. But, it is always worth it, for I have an outstanding staff to thank for their hard work and creative input. I thank the Friends who are always there to support the library in any way they can. Lastly, I thank the Library Board of Trustees, who had a banner year when they were able to purchase a second parcel of land for future library expansion. They are truly forward thinking individuals who have the current and long term needs of the library and of the town of Newington always in their

thoughts and close to their hearts. And, once again, I thank Board President Maureen Lyons, for her advice, wisdom, and intelligent leadership throughout the year.

| Statistical summary | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | % change |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Items circulated | 410,112 | 418,561 | -2% |
| Total registration | 12,768 | 12,728 | ----- |
| People count | 257,929 | 268,179 | -3% |
| New registration | 1,797 | 1,794 | ----- |
| Reference quest. | 64,997 | 63,455 | +2% |
| Children's programs | 549 | 570 | -3% |
| Attendance | 24,038 | 20,905 | +15% |
| Children's comp. use | 9,110 | 8,147 | +12% |
| Child summer reading | 1,301 | 1,329 | -2% |
| Adult summer reading | 420 | n.a. | ----- |
| Teen programs | 30 | 26 | ----- |
| Attendance | 1,045 | n.a. | ----- |
| Items added | 15,335 | 16,015 | -4% |
| Items deleted | 7,176 | 4,351 | +65% |
| Teen computers | 5,856 | 4,511 | +30% |
| Adult Internet usage | 20,089 | 19,078 | +5% |
| Homepage visits | 81,465 | 80,684 | ----- |
| Library holdings | 153,767 | 153,837 | ----- |
| Volunteer hours | 1,494 | 1,392 | +7% |
| Books mended | 897 | 985 | -8% |
| AV repairs | 2,439 | 2,004 | +22% |

V. NOMINATIONS

Maureen asked Tony Palermino to report on nominations. Tony indicated that there are two three-year term renewals of the corporate members: Dennis Doyle and Maureen O'Connor Lyons. He asked if there were any more nominations from the floor. There were no more nominations, and he asked for a motion to accept the two three-year renewals of the corporate members. All were in favor and the motion to accept these two three-year renewals was unanimously accepted. He then presented the nominations for the officers as follows: President-Maureen O'Connor Lyons, Vice-President-Paul Crosswaith, Secretary-Judy Igielski, and Treasurer-Iris Larsson. He asked if there were any more nominations from the floor. There were no more nominations, and he asked for a motion to accept the officers as presented, all were in favor, and the motion to accept the officers as presented was unanimously accepted.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Recognition of Honorees

Judy Igielski recognized Lucy and John DiNardi who received a blanket.

Neil Ryan recognized the Newington Volunteer Ambulance Association and Chief Scott Woods who received a plaque.

Marie Dowling recognized Fred Callahan and Bowl-A-Rama who received a plaque.

Sue Halpin recognized the Newington Skating Arena who received a plaque.

Eric Rothauser recognized Vincent Camilli who received a plaque.

B. Introduction of LRW Legacy Society and Recognition of Inductees

Anna Eddy and Eric Rothauser announced the Library's Fund Development and the introduction of the Legacy Society. George Hanel and Richard Leinhard were inducted and their names are on the plaque. Others receiving commemorative membership certificates included Clarence Bachman, Joan Briggaman and Janis Kaval, Ruth Miller, Catherine and Joseph Palermino, and Mary Eddy Schlesinger.

C. Introduction of the Catherine and Joseph Palermino Continuing Education Scholarship

Tony Palermino introduced his mother and spoke about his parents' commitment to education. In his parents honor, Tony and his sister and brother have instituted the Catherine and Joseph Palermino Continuing Education Scholarship for Library staff members to use towards continuing their education.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENT AND PRESENTATION OF NEW OFFICERS

Tony Palermino announced that all votes have been cast and the slate of officers as presented earlier was unanimously accepted.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Maureen O'Connor Lyons thanked Marian and her staff for the wonderful work they do at the Library, and to Marian for her continuing support and dedication to the Library and the Library Board of Trustees. She went on to congratulate the honorees this evening, and thanked everyone for attending. She asked that people stay for a reception. **MOTION: Eric Rothauser made a motion to adjourn, Tony Palermino seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion to adjourn was unanimously accepted at 7:55 P.M.**